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BRITISH COLUMBIA,

—THE—

# BRITAIN OF THE PACIFIC.

BULLETIN No. 12.

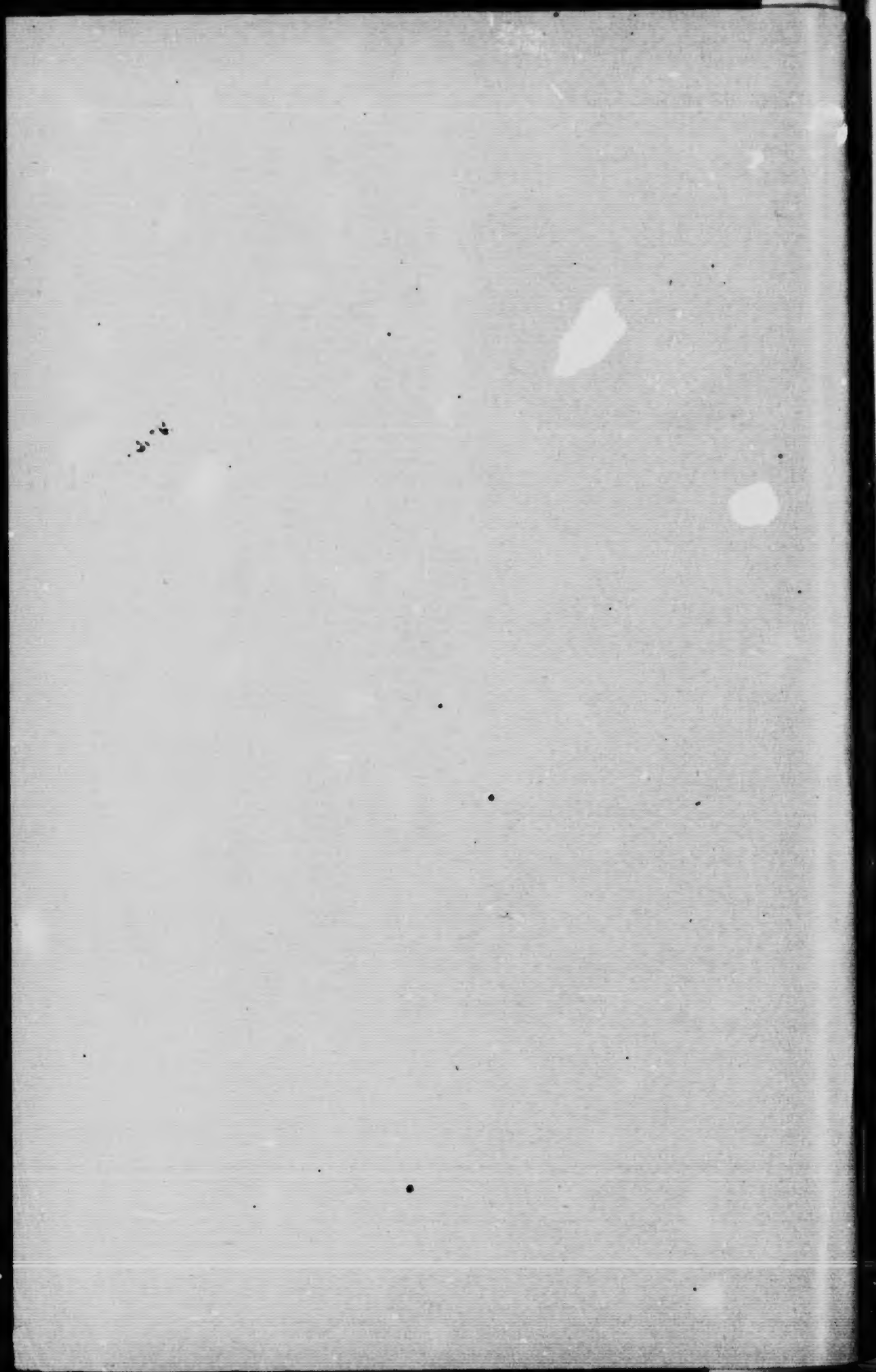


THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

VICTORIA, B. C. :

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BRITISH COLUMBIA,

—THE—

BRITAIN OF THE PACIFIC.

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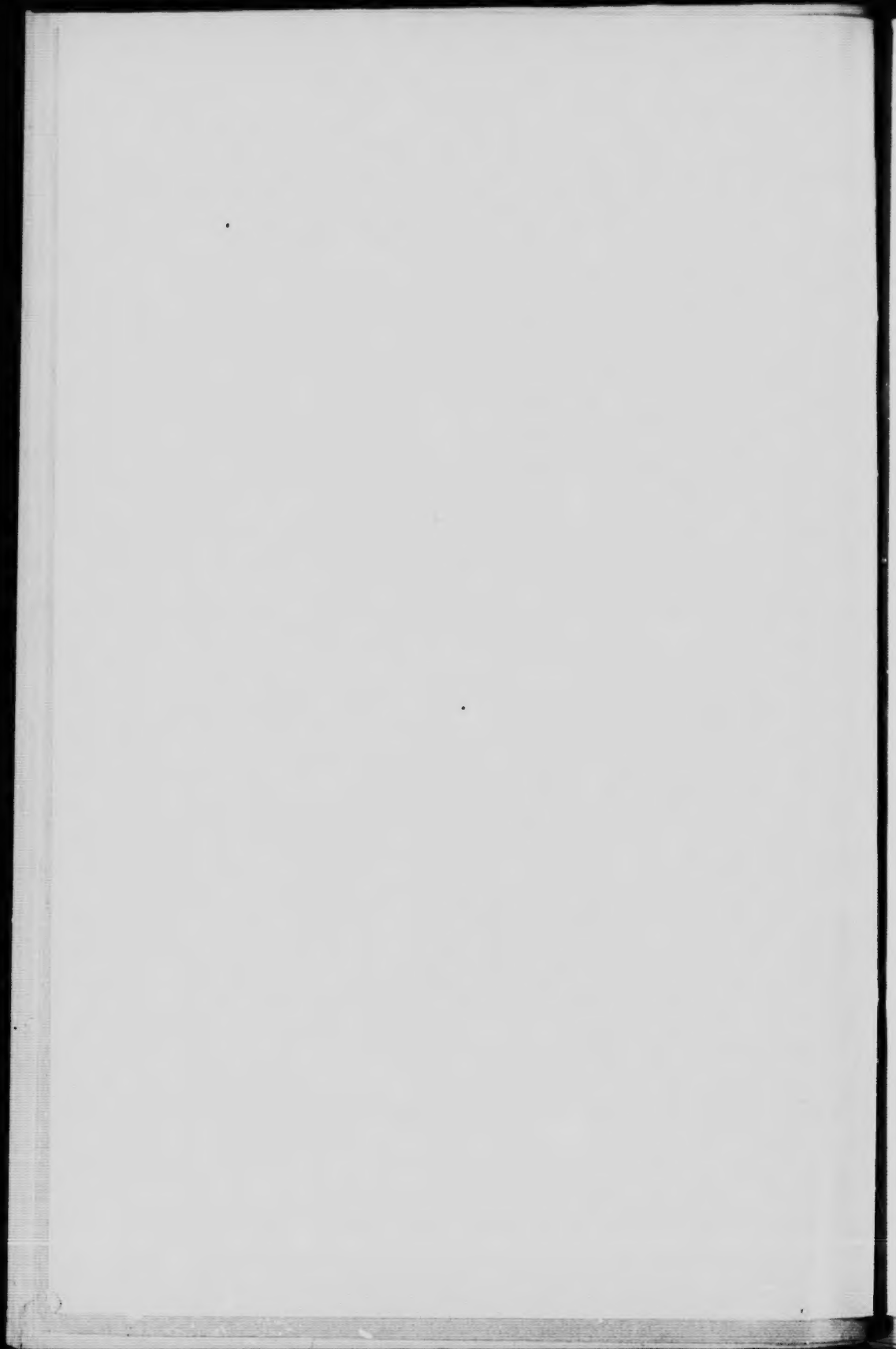
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1903.



# BRITISH COLUMBIA, THE BRITAIN OF THE PACIFIC.

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Report of Lecture by Hon. J. H. Turner, Agent-General, B. C., delivered at  
the Free Library, Swansea, Wales, Thursday, February 26th,  
1903, Sir John Llewellyn, Bart., in the Chair.

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IT has occurred to me that some of my hearers may possibly think the name I have adopted for my paper is too presumptuous, and that as a resident of nearly half a century in British Columbia, I might have chosen a less assertive title, especially as the people of that part of the Great Dominion are somewhat notorious for their modesty. But the object of my paper is to shew, and I hope convince, you that the title "The Britain of the Pacific" is correct, and eminently applicable to that most westerly portion of our Empire on the American continent.

Before, however, considering why this title is so appropriate, I should like to refer briefly to the early history of that country. It seems difficult to realise that more than 330 years ago one of the great old sea-dogs of Britain sailed to the parallel of 48°, close to the entrance of the channel which separates Vancouver Island from the Mainland, now known as the Straits of San Juan de Fuca. For it was in 1578, or 1579, that the intrepid navigator, Sir Francis Drake, reached that point of the Pacific, but he appears not to have noticed Vancouver Island, and stress of weather drove him back to Drake's Bay, near San Francisco. In 1592, Juan de Fuca sailed up these straits for some distance, and his description of the channel and islands is found to be wonderfully correct. He was convinced that he had discovered the North-West Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic. After him many adventurous spirits visited these regions, some on similar quest as Drake, and others in search of booty or from hatred of the Spanish, who first occupied some portion of that part of the globe. Cook, in 1778, appears to have missed the Straits of Fuca and went up the West Coast of Vancouver Island, and Vancouver, in 1792, went as far as Nootka Sound. The Spanish name is perpetuated on the Coast by the designations of the various islands and prominent points, such as San Juan, Fidalgo, Rosario, Gonzalo, Cortez, Galiano, Angeles and others.

Bartering for furs on the coast was carried on with the Indians till the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1848, established a trading post at Camosun, now Victoria. After this the trade became fully organized by that great company.

Gold was discovered in the same year and there was a great influx of miners and traders, and practically the modern history of the Province commenced as a Crown Colony. In 1871 Confederation took place, and in 1880 that gigantic work, the Canadian Pacific Railway, was commenced, and made a record in railway construction by being completed in 1885. Then a new life was begun and is rapidly being developed.

Before going on to my subject I cannot refrain from turning again to the wonderful doings of the old navigators. When we consider the sort of vessels they sailed in, craft so small that in these days they would be considered only fit for short coast voyages; yet they set out from Europe over seas and to lands almost unknown, making their

way, as they had to do when on that North-West Coast, in the Straits of Fuca or the Gulf of Georgia, amongst hundreds of islands, through narrow and tortuous channels, and amidst erratic tides and currents, troubled too by hostile natives. Yet all these difficulties they overcame with very poor appliances, and marked down with fair accuracy islands, rocks, tide-rips and currents, places that even steamers find it difficult to navigate at the present time. The foundation of that portion of Britain was firmly laid by these remarkable men, and by the honourable methods of the powerful Hudson's Bay Company, and to-day we see there a free, self-governing Province, as the outpost of Britain on the Pacific Ocean.

Turning now to British Columbia of to-day, we soon arrive at the conclusion that it is no mean country. Its size is about three times that of the United Kingdom. It extends from the parallel of 48° 50' for over 700 miles to about the 60th parallel, and from the Rocky Mountains on the east to the Pacific on the west is over 500 miles broad, and has an acreage of about 260,000,000, and yet its population is only about 200,000, whilst the United Kingdom, with under 78,000,000 acres, has a population of 42,000,000. Anyone visiting the motherland, after a long residence abroad, cannot help feeling that possibly it is getting over-crowded. I do not say that really there are too many people in the land, but to colonials it looks as if that were the case, and that it would be greatly to the advantage of both motherland and colonies if there were a more equitable division of the people. The home farm seems to be over-stocked, whilst the splendid outlying fields and pastures are deficient in that respect, and, consequently, to a certain extent, neglected. Now, the great characteristic of our race is that it is a coloniser. It builds up new countries, giving just and free Governments, perfect liberty, and all the magnificent traditions of British history, but it is necessary that this character should be kept up. It is no use to establish colonies unless interest in them is perpetuated. Indeed, what is wanted is that they should all be integral active and living parts of the empire. In promoting the welfare and advancement of the colonies you are adding to the life, strength and wealth of the old island homes. This being the fact, it is remarkable that so very large a proportion of the emigration from these shores goes not to the colonies of the empire, but to foreign countries, where generally the laws are not so good, or to say the best for them, are in no case better than in our own possessions, where the chances for success in life are certainly of the greatest.

There are various classes of emigrants leaving the old land, some with considerable capital going out to seek new enterprises, others with moderate incomes looking for quiet homes where they can have some of the natural pleasures and amenities of life with less form and expense than here. There are farmers who hope for better opportunities in a less crowded country; mechanics seeking larger pay; labourers who, although perhaps not of the marching army of the unemployed, still look for more work and greater remuneration; and there are thousands of young men of health, strength and determination, who are ready for anything. To all of these different classes I would say that before you finally decide where to go, get all the information you can about British Columbia. I would, too, advise all to carefully consider before they take the final step. It is no use, for instance, going to the Province I represent with the idea of having a happy-go-lucky, easy life, all play and no work. No; the man to get on there is the one with energy and determination, one not afraid of work. It is not the country for young men to go to looking for situations in offices or shops, but it is the right place for men with capital, who will not hurriedly invest it, but will study the



situation and take up the development of some of the important and vast resources of the Province. It is a delightful land for those who have a moderate income, who would like to live in a beautiful, healthy climate, amongst the glories of woodland, lake, river and mountain scenery, with good shooting, fishing, boating, golf, cricket and all the other old country amusements. Here they can live as moderately as they like, adding to the pleasures of life and to their own resources by taking up horticulture, fruit-growing, dairying, or other like work. For able mechanics, miners and labourers there is a moderate demand at high wages; but none should go who have not some money to keep themselves for a time until employment is obtained. For farmers with small capital the opportunities are good. No country is better adapted for fruit-growing, dairying and mixed farming, and there is a ready market for all the produce they can raise.

Young men of ability, if they are determined to work and do not mind putting up with some disappointments, are, I always feel, much more certain of ultimate success in any good, healthy Colony than they can be in the crowded lands of Europe. Colonies do not want those who cannot get on anywhere—they want the best. This may appear selfish, but I am quite sure that good men building up fine Colonies are really adding to the wealth and strength of the Mother Country.

The undeveloped resources of the Province are very great. Probably the most important are its minerals. Coal, gold, silver, iron, copper and lead exist from the boundary on the south and through to the north for some 700 miles, across from the east to the coast, and on the islands of the Pacific. The discovery of gold 50 years ago brought in a large number of miners from all parts of the world, and changed the land from a fur-hunting reserve of the Hudson's Bay Company to a home for the people. A large amount of the precious metal was taken out from the streams and shallow diggings between 1860 and 1870, and gradually the richest of the placer mines were worked out then and, owing to the high cost of living, the poorer diggings had to be given up; but up to 1881 the product from these works was some £10,000,000. From that time to 1898 the annual product of placer gold was about £150,000 annually. After that, owing to the development of quartz mines, the production of gold steadily went up until in 1902 it was about a million and a half sterling. It is evident that this increase will continue as the country is being opened up by roads, trails and railways, so that the cost of living in the mining sections has been greatly reduced, and, as this goes on, many thousands of acres of auriferous ground will become profitable to work. Thus gold has again become the most important of our products for the present. Next to it comes coal, the output of which in 1902 amounted to 1,700,000 tons. The greater part of this was mined in Vancouver Island, the only other important mines actively working being those on the great Crow's Nest field. At this point there is an enormous deposit of coal turning out now some 2,000 tons daily, and it is said will shortly increase this output to 5,000 tons and subsequently to 15,000 tons daily. This coal has been of great importance to the mines of copper, silver and lead in the same section of the country, as it makes excellent coke, and the price of coke to the smelters has been reduced from \$18 a ton to \$8 or \$9 a ton. This has given a great impetus to the production of minerals in southern British Columbia. Coal, however, is found, and further discoveries are yearly being made, through the whole length and breadth of the Province. At Similkameen, not far from the Canadian Pacific Railway, a coal mine is now about to be opened, another at Kaploops, and another right up north at Skeena River. Then, at Queen

Charlotte Island, there is a great body of fine coal on the line of traffic for steamers to Alaska and China. This at present lies idle, waiting the magic touch of the capitalists, and all the product will be wanted for the rapidly developing steam navigation of the Pacific.

Next in importance of the minerals is copper. Probably our Province contains more great bodies of copper ore than any other country; but little, however, has yet been worked. Yet the product last year, in spite of the fall in price of this metal and some difficulties in connection with the labour problem, amounted to about 15,000 tons, or three times as much as in 1899. The most important mines at present are situated in what is known as the Boundary Country, in southern British Columbia, a little north of the international line, and the greatest group is worked by the Miner-Graves Syndicate and reduced to matte at their smelter situated at the town of Grand Forks, near the mines, smelting now 1,700 tons daily. Here the most scientific methods are used, and the smelter is pronounced by American copper authorities to be the best one on the continent, reducing ore in a more economical way, at a lower cost, than anywhere else in America. Near it is the Snowshoe Group of mines, owned by a London company, and now rapidly coming to the front. Within a few miles is situated the beautiful town of Greenwood and a smelter of the same name, where about 600 tons of ore are reduced daily.

If we turn now a little eastward we find the well-known City of Rossland, perched on the summit of the mountain and surrounded by mineral-bearing hills, and nestling right under the celebrated Le Roi, War Eagle, Centre Star and many other great mines. It is true that some of these have got into ill-repute in London, but not on account of deficiency in the value of the mines in hardly any case, but really, principally, from the methods pursued in turning a concern with a small capital into a great joint stock company, with shares for quotation on the Stock Exchange. Probably in some cases mines that would have been well and profitably worked with a capital of £100,000 or £200,000 have been, by the aid of the promoters and agents, capitalised at £1,000,000 or more, a large part of which did not go to develop the mine, but probably into the wide open pockets which are always gaping when manipulations in finances are going on; and I would ask what dividend can a shareholder expect on £1,000,000 from a mine so loaded, however good, though it might have paid well if capitalised at £100,000. This condition has been illustrated of late by a mine that is much traduced in this country: I refer to the Le Roi. I believe that this property does possess great intrinsic value, and with economical working will almost certainly eventually pay good dividends; for, in the face of labour troubles and extremely low price for its product, it has paid a handsome profit during the last three months, which has been applied in paying off debts, and with the new and cheaper methods of reduction now being introduced is likely to greatly improve even on the present success. This mine is, I am informed, turning out about 1,000 tons of ore daily. There are many other mines throughout the Rossland and Trail District producing largely; the product of the Rossland Camp in 1901 was nearly \$4,000,000.

Further to the north-east there is the great silver-lead field of Slocan, whose production in 1901 was about \$2,500,000. But in 1902, owing to the great decline in the price of lead and silver, most of the mines here were closed down temporarily. Many of them have a certain quantity of zinc in the ore, and, a demand having arisen in the States for this metal, work is being resumed on several of the properties. Further south-east are the Nelson and Ymir Mines, and the St. Eugene, a great lead mine. Then



up north 100 miles is the rich Lardeau District, now being opened up by railways. Time will not allow me to more than name other districts, such as Cariboo, 300 miles to the north; Atlin, still further north; to the west, Lillooet and Similkameen; and to the coast, where we find the rich copper and gold mines on Vancouver Island, now being developed with much success, though only commenced about three years since. Two smelters have already been erected for these mines. On the west coast of Vancouver Island copper and gold ores are found through its whole length. It must not be forgotten that it is only about nine years since what is known as lode mining was commenced in British Columbia, under very great difficulties at that time, and yet the product of these mines is already over \$10,000,000 annually, and practically most of the mines have been started well within that period. They are, in fact, in their infancy.

I don't think any other mining country has done so much in so short a time. One hears remarks that the mines of the United States have done much better, but it seems to me to be quite forgotten that nothing is said about the many years the American mines were in their development. Only when they began to produce were they talked of, the years of preparation being quite forgotten. But I must pass on to other resources—without more than just stating that on the coast and islands, as also in the interior, there are large bodies of iron-bearing ores not touched yet for commercial purposes, except at one point, Texada Island, the produce of the mines there being sent to the American smelters at Tacoma.

Then throughout all the lands there are great forests of the finest timber, so dense in places that as much as 500,000 feet have been got to the acre, and 50,000 and 100,000 feet is quite a common production, whilst in Eastern Canada, if they get 20,000 feet to the acre they consider they are doing wonderfully well. Forest statisticians put down the acreage of timber in the Province at about 160,000,000 feet. The timber business has been rapidly improving during the last three years and now is booming, the mills working night and day and unable to keep up with the demand, and jointly with this prices have nearly doubled. British Columbia is, in fact, the great timber country of the world, and, as in the case of its mines, the business is only now commencing. Applications are coming to the Government for timber limits daily, and this movement is accelerated by the great demand that is likely to arise for wood to be turned into paper pulp. The Province is eminently suited for this industry, for alongside its forests are rapid rivers and mountain torrents, capable of developing millions of horse-power to work the mills. Eventually I believe that most of the towns and cities of Britain will be paved with British Columbia pine or cedar, as it is so specially suited for that purpose, wearing smoothly and keeping perfect to the last. The annual requirement of Great Britain at the present time appears to be about 22,000,000 feet, though most of the towns are only just beginning to use wood for paving purposes.

Another of the valuable assets of the Province is fish. Everyone knows something of its salmon, as in one year, 1901, over 67,000,000 lbs. were shipped to England, about 1½ lbs. to every man, woman and child in the United Kingdom. Some thousands of men are employed in this industry, and though millions of salmon are got yearly, still their number does not appear to diminish. I might tell you much more about salmon, but fish stories are proverbially dangerous, and I have not yet mentioned our trout, sturgeon, codfish, halibut, smelt and herring, with which our rivers and seas abound, and when I tell you that I have seen men raking fish out of the sea all alive and filling their canoes and boats with them in a very few minutes, you may perhaps consider it a

fish story; or when I say that I have seen streams so full of salmon that it was difficult to force a boat through them, you may consider it another. These stories, however, are absolute truths. As to the fish product of the sea, it is practically untouched, excepting the catching and exportation of a considerable quantity of halibut, which goes principally to Chicago and New York; our great sea farm is, in fact, practically unexploited.

Turning to another industry, agriculture, only a very few years ago it was said that British Columbia might be a mining country but was no good for anything else, but within the last few years farming, the great backbone of a country, is coming rapidly to the front. The country in many parts is eminently suited for mixed farming, dairying, fruit-growing, and allied industries, and there is a good market at the best prices for all the products. Some years since the Government of the Province introduced and passed Acts in the Legislature for the protection and encouragement of the farmer, under which Agricultural Associations, Farmers' Institutes, Fruit-growers' Societies and Creameries were formed. A strict inspection of fruit and fruit trees was also established, the result being that agriculture is now carried on in the very best way, and products have greatly improved. It is to my mind doubtful whether any better apples, pears, cherries, plums or strawberries are grown in the world than in British Columbia. I may perhaps be prejudiced about it, but certainly I fail to find in London any equal to those in the Pacific Province. Already the production of fruit has become of mercantile importance, for last year a very considerable quantity was shipped, from one farm alone, 50 large railway car-loads of fruit was exported to the North-West, all sold at a good price, and from the Province last year, up to the 1st November, about 130 car-loads were sold to Manitoba and the neighbouring territories, where fruit is not grown. Very fine peaches are grown in some sections, and their cultivation is likely to prove highly profitable. The large quantity of agricultural produce still imported shows that the farmers of British Columbia have a good market, for there was thus brought in by land and sea last year butter, poultry, eggs, hams, bacon, etc., to the value of about \$1,250,000—a very large quantity in proportion to the population, but, then, everyone lives well there and demands a good supply. The whole of this could have been produced at home, and a good deal of it of better quality.

I have somewhat hastily reviewed the more important of the undeveloped resources of the country, and will now summarise them in a few words:—

First we have Mining, for the precious metals and for copper, iron, lead and coal. This, as far as gold is concerned, was commenced long ago, and then practically stopped from 1881 till about 1894, when lode mining began to be of importance, and now the total production of all these minerals is about \$18,000,000 yearly, whilst coal and coke produce \$6,500,000. And there are many thousands of acres of mineral lands not yet even prospected.

Then Timber; for this I have only the report of the four principal mills, and these only of the timber exported, which amounted to 63,678,824 feet in 1901. The return for 1902, which was much larger, is not yet in; but in addition there are many other mills of considerable importance, and the home demand is large. Taking this into consideration, probably the production is double the quantity stated.

Following this is our Fish Trade. The value of the salmon pack in 1901 was approximately \$5,000,000. The pack of 1902 was smaller, and it has not yet reached me. The deep sea fishing has not been taken up yet to any extent.

Then comes Agriculture. No returns are made in the Province of the value of the production and none of the agricultural product is yet exported—with the exception of fruit—as not half enough is grown for home consumption. Farmers are wanted to alter this condition of affairs.

There are other valuable resources of the Province that I have not mentioned, such as its building stones, marble, granite and sandstone, and abundance of limestone. These, as population comes in, will all be developed. Then some sections are very suitable for the growth of flax, sugar beets and tobacco.

But I have said enough to substantiate my claim that the resources are of such a character as to completely confirm the appropriateness of the title I have adopted, "The Britain of the Pacific." All the factors for making that Province a great country are there. This is the age of iron and coal, and side by side we find them in great abundance, and associated with them is the vast water-power to develop all the electricity required. Then there are the immense stores of that other requirement of the age, timber; in fact, all the necessities to make a great country are possessed in abundance. These latent resources are just those that helped to give older Britain its pre-eminence. Then British Columbia has a great advantage in its splendid healthy climate, making it just the right home for the Briton to live and work in.

I will now refer to the Province as a resort for tourists. Here is practically a new field; from the time the traveller reaches its confines on the east till he arrives at the coast, some 500 miles to the west, he passes magnificent scenery, mountains and glaciers, roaring water-falls, fine rivers, lovely lakes and placid streams, through great forests of cedar and pine, with trees towering aloft some 200 to 300 feet, and at the coast he finds smooth waters where he can steam for hundreds of miles, amidst a labyrinth of islands. In a recent number of the "Field and Country Gentleman" appears the following, from the pen of its correspondent, who made the tour of Canada with a party of newspaper correspondents:—

"It would be impossible to imagine a more glorious paradise for a yachtsman than the western fiords of British Columbia. Added to the wonderful scenery would be the delights of cruising amidst practically unknown waters, amidst islands of all sizes, in a climate similar to the west of Scotland, with but a fraction of the same amount of rain. To the naturalist the new phases of flora and fauna must lend continual excitement, and to the sportsman it is enough to say that the waters teem with fish and the hills with game. There are spots where you can shoot white mountain goats from the boat, and higher up a short distance along the coast you get in touch with big-horn. Up at Yukatau Rapids we counted no less than 60 white-headed eagles on the wing at the same moment."

A correspondent of the "Daily Chronicle" writes of Vancouver Island:—"Vancouver Island has fully participated in the industrial awakening of the mining districts on the mainland of British Columbia. Both the bounty and the beauty of nature have richly endowed this lovely island of the west, first sighted by Captain Cook's famous lieutenant from whom it takes its name. It is a marvel to me that it is not peopled by millions instead of by only a few thousands of people. The tourist, the artist, the sportsman, as well as the explorer, the prospector, the agriculturist and the capitalist, can find ample material here to work upon. The forest primeval may be seen on Vancouver in all its glory, and the mineral resources of the island are undoubtedly rich. A great impetus has just been given to the mining industry of the island, chiefly by the enterprise of American capitalists."

And E. F. Knight, in his book descriptive of the Royal tour, says :—

"Victoria is not only a busy place, a great emporium of trade, the distributing centre of British Columbia, but also a favourite place of residence for well-to-do people; in no other city on the Western coast of America does one find oneself amid a society of such cultured people, British born and Canadian, whether they be men of leisure, members of the learned professions, or engaged in business. In short, Victoria as a place in which to make one's home presents many social and, I understand, even educational advantages. The country near the town is singularly beautiful, the undulating promontory being covered with woods of pine and fir and a lovely wild jungle of arbutus, roses, flowering bushes of many varieties, and English broom, which has spread over the more open country, so that it is ablaze with golden blossom."

Of the City of Vancouver he says :—

"Standing, as it does, on an undulating wooded peninsula and nearly surrounded by water, Vancouver has indeed a splendid situation. As one wanders for the first time through the busy thoroughfares one finds oneself frequently brought to a pause at street corners and in open places to admire the wonderful views that suddenly burst on one, extending far over blue waters, pine-clad shores, and the white peaks of the distant Rockies. The traveller who visits this fine city with its broad, well paved, electric-lighted streets, its handsome public buildings and houses of business, many of which are constructed of granite, and its pretty suburbs, to which the electric tramways carry the citizens, cannot but be filled with astonishment when he remembers that Vancouver had no existence sixteen years ago, its site being then covered with dense forest. Stanley Park, which is at the head of the peninsula on which Vancouver stands, surely is the fairest pleasure ground possessed by any city on the continent; here the virgin forest is to be seen in its natural grandeur, untouched by the axe of the woodman; one might well imagine oneself to be among the unexplored wilds of the northern coast. As one follows the road that pierces this forest there is on each side a high undergrowth, as impenetrable as the densest jungle of tropical South America, and soaring high above are the closely growing giant trees enclosing the road as between two walls, cedars and firs hundreds of feet in height and of mighty girth. I was shewn one ancient cedar whose trunk at the base is 70 feet in circumference."

Combined with these great resources awaiting development there is the splendid advantage of the geographical position of the Province, and its possession of the finest accessible harbours of the north-west coast, at the terminus of the great Canadian Pacific Railway, by which Liverpool is brought within twelve days of Victoria, and, reaching out right on to the best line of ocean travel to China, Australia and the islands of the Pacific, it cannot fail to have a great influence on and be a great factor in the growing trades of that vast ocean.

Some of the most far-seeing business men claim that the Pacific is the ocean on which the greatest increase of the world's commerce is to take place—but what country is to get the lion's share of it? Americans believe that it must fall to them, but our own Empire has got the ships and got the men and got the money too, and she has got what is of as great importance, that jewel in her crown—Canada—whose people possess all the ability and energy of the best of our race, and whose land contains most of the important materials of commerce that must be in great demand over all the Western Hemisphere. It seems to me that with Canadian activity and British determination a very large part, at least, of this increasing trade should be held by the Mistress of the Seas.

That British Columbia, the outpost of our great Empire in North America, the gateway of the Pacific, is well worthy of the attention of the business men and capitalists of Great Britain, is very evident from the fact of what has already been accomplished there by a small population. To clearly show this, I think it is only necessary to state the actual amount of business, as indicated by its imports and exports. The exports in 1881 were \$2,255,753, in 1891 they were \$6,199,280, and in 1901 \$21,645,000. The imports in the same years were respectively \$2,489,246, \$5,477,411, and \$11,137,436. Thus it will be seen that the joint trade of 1901 amounted to \$32,782,436 for a population of only 200,000.

The internal revenue of the Province has gone up from under half a million in 1881 to \$2,140,000 in 1902. Indicating the great productive wealth of the Province is the fact that since Confederation it has paid to the Dominion Government for all the expenditure that the Government has made in the Province, including the cost of the Canadian Pacific Railway, within its borders; and has a considerable balance to its credit in addition.

Taking all these facts into consideration, it is evident that this great western country, with its beautiful and wonderfully healthful climate, its magnificent scenery, its well administered laws, its free, non-sectarian education, is eminently the land for the capitalist, the gentleman of leisure, the sportsman, the farmer and the working man, and is a most desirable place to make a home.

[Sixty views of British Columbia were shown after the lecture.]

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